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## Local group looks to give mentally ill patients resources to avoid jail

Tre Ward [teward@waaytv.com](mailto:teward@waaytv.com) Updated 15 hrs ago



Mental Health Funding

Increasing numbers of mentally ill patients in prisons are raising concerns for local doctors. One group in the Tennessee Valley is looking to address those numbers.

The North Alabama Mental Health Coalition looks to first begin dialogue with hospitals, law enforcement, and other state agencies to address these alarming numbers.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, one in five people suffer from some type of mental illness in the united states. Here in Alabama, a survey by the Treatment Advocacy Center reveals that the mentally ill population in prisons in the state has gone up 15% from 1971.

Jeb Murphree with the local Mental Health Coalition says something has to be done to address those numbers.

"Finding those new options, those solutions, is certainly important to not only our law enforcement, and to ease their burden, but to help those individuals that have found themselves in that situation," Murphree said.

Group leaders say mental health patients have limited resources and services because of the lack of state funding.

They also encourage anyone who needs help with their mental illness to call the Crisis Services of North Alabama at 256-716-1000.

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Tre Ward